

Hunter Region Priority Weed

African boxthorn

Invades pastures and harbours pests



Management guide



In NSW, weeds are regulated by the *NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015*. All land managers have a **General Biosecurity Duty (GBD)** to contain the spread of weeds.

“General Biosecurity Duty means that any person dealing with plant matter must take measures to prevent, minimise or eliminate the biosecurity risk (as far as is reasonably practicable).”

African Boxthorn is an additional species of concern within the Hunter Regional Weed Management Plan. Protection of agricultural assets from the impact of Boxthorn is the focus.

Mitigate the risk of new weeds being introduced to their land. Land managers should mitigate spread from their land. The plant should not be bought, sold, grown, carried or released into the environment.

For further information contact your local Weeds Officer via **[Hunter Regional Weeds](#)** or visit **[NSW WeedWise](#)**.

Impacts

African boxthorn is a serious woody weed on lighter soils within the Hunter Region.

- Forms an impenetrable thicket, inhibiting stock movement, reducing pasture area and harbouring feral animals.
- Aggressive invader of pastures, bushland, roadsides, waterways.
- All parts toxic to humans.
- Fruit hosts fruit fly, tomato fly and house fly.

- Grows on all soil types but particularly prefers lighter soils and dry creek beds.
- Flowers and fruits from 2 years, usually seasonal but if conditions are right, can seed and germinate any time.
- Spread by birds and foxes eating fruit, cuttings from pruning, and suckering from roots left after removal.
- A Weed of National Significance*

**These weeds are regarded as the worst weeds in Australia because of their invasiveness, potential for spread, and economic and environmental impacts.*

Management

- Best controlled while young.
- Mechanical removal can be effective. Remove all parts and destroy by burning.
- Cultivate after mechanical removal and rake to ensure all root material is removed and destroyed.
- Revegetate with suitable native species for bushland; or native or introduced perennial pasture.
- Maintain good ground cover, to provide competition for new germinating seedlings.
- Control in areas used as habitat for native animals may need to be staged to reduce the impact on those species.
- Chemical application must be timed to growth cycle and soil moisture levels for effective control. Plants can defoliate and regrow leaves in cycles under chemical treatments. Foliar, cut stump, basal bark and root application are all effective methods.
- Grazing can effectively control seedling regrowth.

Identification



The flowers are white with pale blue markings and fragrant. They have five petals. *Photo: P Sykes.*

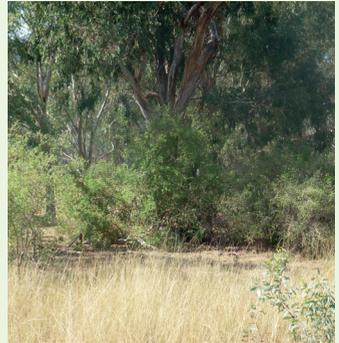


Each smaller spiny branchlet ends in a stout spine. *Photo: H Rose*



The berries are green when young. When ripe they are orange-red and succulent, round, 5 to 10 mm in diameter and contain 35 to 70 seeds.

Photo: H Rose



Thickets form under shade trees in grazing land, blocking stock from using these shady areas. *Photo: P Sykes*



African boxthorn competes with pasture and native bushland. *Photo: P Sykes*

Management Calendar

The calendar below outlines the management approach for a typical year.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Growth stage	Germination at any time with good moisture and soil temperature above 15C											
	May drop leaves with intense heat.		Berries produced			Drops leaves with cold temperatures			Flowering, although can flower all year in good conditions			
Action	Mechanical removal possible at any time. Take care on sloping and riparian sites not to cause or worsen erosion. Monitor for regrowth.											
	With good care, re-establish pasture species at any suitable time.											
			Best time for revegetation with native shrubs and grasses.									
			May be sprayed if plant not stressed and growth is good.						Best time for herbicide control.			

Recommended control options may vary according to your area. There are experienced professional Weeds Officers based in each Local Government Area who have local knowledge and can provide expert advice for your weed management situation. Contact your expert Weeds Officer at your local Council or at Hunter Regional Weeds.

Herbicide control options for all areas in NSW, including current herbicide registrations, are available for African boxthorn at <http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/1>.

Remember that all herbicide must be used and handled in accordance with the label or permit.



Get the WeedWise app

<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/AfricanBoxthorn>

Further information

For further information on how to meet your General Biosecurity Duty on your property your best source is the expert Weeds Officer at your local Council or via Hunter Regional Weeds.

Contact Hunter Regional Weeds
www.hunterregionalweeds.net.au

Hunter Local Land Services
www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au

NSW Weed Wise
www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au

